



Division of Communication and Information

PRESS RELEASE

Abuja, Nigeria: 26 November 2006- The Africa- South American Summit (ASA) began today in the Nigerian capital Abuja with a meeting of senior officials and ambassadors from the two regions. H.E Ambassador Dr Hakeem Baba Ahmed, the Permanent Secretary in the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Pedro Motta of the Community of South American Nations (CASA) and Ambassador John Kayode Shinkaiye, Chief of Staff in the Bureau of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission addressed the opening ceremony. The session was moderated by Ambassador Akinsanya, Nigerian representative to Ethiopia and the African Union.

Today's meeting was attended by ambassadors and senior officials from member states of the African Union as well as Morocco and those from the CASA. It seeks to establish the basic groundwork for the success of both the ministerial and Summit meetings that will take place on 28 and 30 November respectively.

The objective of the Summit in general is to strengthen cooperation between the states and the peoples of the two regions and forge a stronger strategic partnership to enhance effective multilateralism on a South- South basis. The ultimate aim is to construct and foster a self sustaining and enduring partnership that will transform past association and current affinity into a framework of common strength and mutual purpose.

Speaking on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission Professor Alpha Oumar Konare, Ambassador Shinkaiye said the broad expectation is that the Africa- South America Summit will enable the two regions to increase their leverage and impact in the wider international arena and their respective abilities to deliver on promises of peace, security and development to their people.

At the end of the Summit, Heads of State and Government are expected to emerge with two important practical documents which would drive the cooperation and partnership between the two regions i.e. the Declaration of the 1st Africa- South America Summit and the Plan of Action.

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